

Origins of the Civilian Welfare Fund January 3

One of the benefits of working at NSA is access to the Civilian Welfare Fund, more commonly known as CWF. Whether it be for intramural sports teams, discount tickets, Sam's Club memberships, the recreational reading library, or gift shops, NSAers have come to rely on CWF for a variety of services that make our lives both on and off NSA property more enjoyable.

NSA's CWF dates from Arlington Hall days in the years just after World War II. Arlington Hall Station was the home of the Army Security Agency, one of NSA's predecessor, and the base would soon also host the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), NSA's direct predecessor. The Arlington Hall Civilian Welfare Fund was established on 9 January 1947 "for the purpose of financing welfare activities for the benefit for all civilians regularly employed on post." When AFSA transitioned into NSA in 1952, the activities appear to have remained under the Arlington Hall CWF until Agency employees began moving to Fort Meade. The NSA CWF was formed in early 1955. The two CWFs frequently cooperated, especially on events for NSA civilians at both sites, until the last NSA personnel left Arlington Hall Station. At that time, the Arlington Hall CWF gave the NSA CWF a portion of its treasury based on the number of civilians transferred to Fort Meade.

In the early years, CWF seemed omnipresent, working to improve virtually every facet of Agency life outside the office. Its activities were wide ranging and included buying magazines for the dispensary waiting room, redecorating the cafeteria, purchasing sanitary disposal containers for the ladies rooms, managing NSA sports teams, convincing planners to allow space in Ops1 for the NSA drugstore and barber shop, loaning small amounts of money to employees, and investigating strange odors emanating from hallway soda machines.

From the formation of the first NSA softball team in the 1940s to the show tickets purchased at the CWF booth an hour or two ago, CWF has been an important part of the NSA culture.